fertilizers available to farmers living on the peaks in Himachal Pradesh on subsidised rates; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Urea is the only fertilizer whose price, movement and distribution is controlled. The Price of urea was revised from Rs. 3320/- per M.T. to Rs. 3660/- per M.T. on 21.2.1997. The price of urea was subsequently raised to Rs. 4140/- per M.T. effect from 2.6.1998. This price increase was revised and the price was restored to Rs. 3660/- per M.T. from 13.6.1998. The price of Urea was again revised to Rs. 4000/- per M.T. with effect from 29.1.1999.

In case of decontrolled P&K fertilizers, the Government operates a scheme of concession to enable sale of these fertilizers at reasonable prices. The Central Government indicated the maximum retail prices for these fertilizers, namely Diammonium Phosphate, Muriate of Potash and various grades of NPK complexes *w.e.f.* 1.4.1997. These maximum retail prices were maintained at the same level for the remaining part of 1997, 1998 and 1999.

(b) and (c) Urea as well as decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers are available to farmers at subsidised rates all over the country including Himachal Pradesh.

Lifting of distribution controls on all Fertilizers

895. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to lift distribution controls on all fertilizers, including urea, diammonium phosphate, moviate of potash, single super phosphate and NPK complexes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps Government have taken so far or propose to take for distribution of fertilizers among the farming community in such a

way that the agricultural operations do not suffer throughout the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) Currently, Urea is the only fertilizer which is under distribution control of Government of India. The distribution of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers has been decontrolled since 25.8.1992. The Government's intention is to ultimately decontrol all fertizers including Urea after taking into account its fiscal capacity so as to achieve an optimum ratio in the consumption of different types of nutrients on the one hand and making available fertilizers to the farmers at a reasonable price on the other. However, the time frame decontrol and deregulation of distribution of Urea is not firmed up as yet.

(c) At present, Urea is the only controlled fertilizer and for which allocations are made State-wise. Urea supplies are arranged to the States as per allocation on aggregate basis by the Government of India. The distribution within the State is arranged by the respective state Governments. The supplies and availability of decontrolled fertilizers are arranged by the State Governments directly through the suppliers. The existing arrangements have generally worked well.

Fertilizer units in the Country

896. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of public and private sector chemical fertilizer units functioning at present in the country, particularly in Assam;

(b) the types of chemical fertilizers produced therein;

(c) whether these units have increased their production capacity during the last three years; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to increase production of chemical fertilizers in the country?

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